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Matrilocality and Patrilineality in Mundurucú Society

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UNILINEAL descent and unilocal residence, by definition, follow one of but two possible lines, the male or the female. Simple arithmetic would therefore dictate that there are four possible combinations of common descent and residence. Only three of the combinations, however, are found to have any frequent and reliable occurrence. Kroeber (1952:213) noted the single lapse in the following observation:

> "Logically the possibility arises of a fourth plan of society: matrilineal but patrilocal . . . I do not know of such a society, and should expect its occurrence to be rare."

This combination is certainly unusual, and ethnographic literature yields practically no descriptions of its unequivocal occurrence. In most cases, the unilocality or unilineality of the group in question is questionable. For example, Leach and Rivers (1947:418) claim the Kachin people of Burma to have patrilineal clans and matrilocal residence. However, the sources which they cite in support of this contention (Mansfield 1922; Hertz-Colliers 1923) do not warrant such positive affirmations as to the rule of descent. This conclusion with regard to the Kachin is verified by Murdock (1956). Residence rules are likewise subject to misinterpretation, for in many cultures matrilocality is frequently a temporary state followed by permanent patrilocality.

In 1952 the writer discovered the co-existence of matrilocality and patrilineality among the Munduruc Indians of the upper Tapajós River in central Brazil.[1] Existing information on the Munduruc had led me to believe, before field research, that the group was patrilocal. Subsequent field investigation proved the contrary to be true, and gives us one of our few authenticated accounts of a patrilineal group in which postmarital residence is permanently matrilocal.

The purpose of this paper is to present the pertinent data for the use of students of social organization, to describe how such a system functions, and to discuss its significance in terms of the evolution of social structure. Consideration of the latter problem will be reserved until the conclusions of this paper, for much of the discussion will hinge upon what seems incongruous, nonfunctional, or dysfunctional in Munduruc society. This material, when analyzed with reference to the limited amount of historical data available, suggests strongly that the Munduruc shifted from patrilocality to matrilocality in the first half of the nineteenth century. The bearing of such a change upon Murdock's observations (1949:196) on the difficulty of a transition from patrilineal to matrilineal descent becomes immediately apparent when it is considered that much of Murdock's position depends upon his persuasive argument that a patrilineal society can change from patrilocality to matrilocality only with great difficulty. It would seem that this shift in residence patterns is possible under certain conditions which will be analyzed functionally among the Munduruc. Matrilocality, following Murdock's use of residence as a determinant

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tional subsistence activities, it placed severe inhibitions upon the extensive warfare formerly customary.

Warfare did not end until about 1902, over a century after the Mundurucú had made peace with the whites. During this time certain internal modifications had occurred in the social structure, but social cohesion had remained intact and the boundaries of the society were still sharply defined and vigorously maintained. Although members were lost to Brazilian society, a hard core of population living near the upper Tapajós River made war upon other Indian groups with energy and success. This was not "aboriginal" warfare; it was frequently waged on behalf of the whites and with firearms supplied by them. But the only information on Mundurucú warfare of any value pertains to the 19th century and was derived from older informants and published sources. This, then, is the proper time dimension of our study, and we turn now to a consideration of the relevant aspects of Mundurucú culture during this period.

The Mundurucú villages were located in the midst of grass-covered savannahs surrounded by dense forest, but their subsistence economy was essentially the same as other groups of the Amazon rain forest. Hunting was important throughout the year, and fishing was primarily a dry season activity. Garden crops included the usual range of Tropical Forest vegetables and fruits, and bitter manioc was the staple product. Manioc flour, known as *farinha* in Brazil, was also traded to the whites by the Mundurucú and constituted their most important commercial commodity in the period prior to the rubber boom.

The division of labor and the organization of work reflected certain basic aspects of Mundurucú social structure. The men hunted and fished and carried out the strenuous task of garden clearing, while the women did the rest of the horticultural work and tended the households. Residence was matrilocal, and the females of each house formed a nucleus of matrilineally related kinswomen; each such household was also a communal work and consumption unit. Each Mundurucú village had about three to five such houses and a men's house; the latter was the locus of male activity, for all the village men slept, ate, partied, and relaxed within its confines.

The membership of the men's house was eclectic in relation to descent. The Mundurucú were divided into more than forty patrilineal clans, linked by loose and unnamed phratric affiliations, and parcelled almost equally between patrilineal, exogamous moieties. But the matrilocal residence rule and the resultant shift of men from their natal households and, commonly, villages continually blocked the formation of co-resident descent groups.

Despite the diversity of their local and lineal origins, the men of a village, and ultimately of the whole tribe, were expected to maintain harmonious and cooperative relations. Cooperation in economic activities transcended the minimal necessities of their ecological adaptation, and any open show of aggression between men was strictly prohibited. The men's house provided the organizational framework within which this unity was expressed, while male

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Mundurucú [from] the essential functions of chieftainship, and contemporary informants commonly ascribe the decline of nucleated village life to the disappearance of such attributes of leadership.

Of even greater importance to the integration of Mundurucú society, warfare activated and intensified male unity and values, both of which functioned to make matrilocality viable. Finally, the only permissible intrasocietal mechanism for the release of aggression was sorcery and the killing of sorcerers, and the previously cited cases indicate that they created as many tensions as they resolved. Actually, the only way in which hostility could be unleashed without damage to the society was against the outside world. Paradoxically for a people who considered all the world as an enemy, the true cause of enmity came from within their own society.

Much of the preceding argument has hinged upon the matrilocal and patrilineal character of Mundurucú society. In a recent article I showed that Mundurucú social structure in the 19th century could only be understood as a result of post-contact change and that the aboriginal society was organized on patrilocal and patrilineal lines (Murphy 1956). The fact that the Mundurucú were vigorous warriors before their shift to matrilocality suggests that warfare acquired new functions subsequent to that change and consequent upon it. These new functions, as they have been outlined in this paper, provide us with an understanding of how Mundurucú society remained cohesive and maintained its boundaries through more than a century of contact with the whites.

We will now broaden our analysis of the function of warfare within Mundurucú society to the closely related problem of its function within the structure of Mundurucú-Brazilian relationships. The two bases of this symbiosis were trade and war. Matrilocality evolved as a result of trade relations with the whites, but it was workable in a patrilineal society only when intrasocietal hostilities were repressed and latent antagonisms channeled into intense warfare. Warfare and the connected ceremonies also helped to perpetuate the system of clanship in this newly-evolved type of society, for they constituted almost the only occasions upon which corporate functions of the fragmented descent groups were exercised. Conversely, matrilocality and patrilineality provided the structure for warfare on a tribal scale and thus enabled the Mundurucú successfully to pursue hostilities against comparatively undisrupted tribes during a period when their own numbers were being reduced through disease and emigration to Brazilian settlements. And by frequently undertaking raids in the service of the whites, the Mundurucú had solidified their peaceful relationship with the technologically and numerically superior society. The Brazilians were willing to respect the autonomy of the Mundurucú as long as it was useful to them. We may conclude that the system of of matrilocality and patrilineality and the institution of warfare were mutually reinforcing and served to maintain Mundurucú society during a period that witnessed the disappearance or dissolution of many of their neighbors.

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also gather large quantities of sclerotella, latex-rubber and Tonka beans, in the forests. The traders on their arrival at the Campinas (the cross-hill-wooded region inhabited by the main body of Mundurucus beyond the extensive bank forest to distribute their wares--cheap cotton cloths, iron hatchets, cutlery, small wares, and cosmetics--amongst the women chiefs, and then wait three or four months for repayment in produce". (1941, pp. 245-246)

When rubber became the major product of commerce the exact pattern of trade was duplicated among the Mundurucu. All of the rubber collected was turned over to the chief, who alone negotiated directly with the trader. The commodities given for the rubber was, insofar as could be ascertained through contemporary informants, equitably distributed to each man in proportion to the rubber he had produced. But since chiefs were normally more progressive than other men, it can be assumed that they did not suffer in their role of middlemen. The share taken by the chief, however, was never so great as to result in truly significant wealth differences. In fact, the traders usually managed to keep the Indians in debt, and this debt was charged against the chief as the representative of the village. Tocantins, who visited the Mundurucu in 1875, published a bill presented to the chief [Tocantins, p. 154]. If this bill is typical, the Indians' indebtedness was frequently very heavy. These debts were used to force the chief to extract greater production from his followers.

As the Mundurucu depended increasingly upon trade, the chief became more subservient economically to the trader, who manipulated him accordingly. The trader eventually was able to appoint "chiefs" to carry on the trade. An appointed chief was usually known as the regidor, or "regidor", as distinguished from the hereditary village chief, who was called capitao-mor or tuhuaeng. By using the "regidor" as local trade representatives, the traders were able to increase their control over the villages. At the same time, by robbing the hereditary chiefs of their trade function, they weakened the entire structure of leadership. In time, the regidor displaced the hereditary chief almost entirely. To increase the prestige of the trader-appointed chief, the trader often took the village on his annual trip to buy supplies in Belem, where the chief's position was confirmed by the governor or some other official.

The Mundurucu dependency upon trade at first apparently increased the power-ful authority of the hereditary chief, for the villagers relied upon him to produce and assign their best informants in trading activities. The appointment of regidores undermined the native chief, and initially increased the trader's control over the village. The people became confused, however, as to whether the regidor or the appointed chief should be regarded as "chief". All feeling towards the regidor of the appointed chiefs began to develop, for the Indians were always aware of, although powerless to cope with, the many practices of the traders, and they usually assigned the regidor a share of the blame. Upon the latter fell the onerous task of goading the people to harder work in the rubber economy. Since most Mundurucu do not even today consider rubber collecting a congenial occupation, the role of the regidor must have done little to increase his popularity. During the field research among the Mundurucu, the young, bilingual trader-appointed "chief" of the village of Cabruca was in danger of losing his life. Distrust of the trader, whom the "chief" represented, was centered upon this young man and threatened his position so greatly that he was on the verge of flight.

In later years, as will be described subsequently, individual Mundurucu Indians have tended increasingly to deal with the trader directly rather than through the "chief". For this reason, village political organization has been effectively shattered.

The white-appointed Mundurucu "chief", unlike his Northeastern Algonkian counterpart, mediated trade relations between a group of followers and the

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sion. After individual trading had become strongly established among the sections of the Mundurucú, however, "chiefs" were chosen by the Indian Agent and by missionaries in order to control the general behavior of the Indians, and not specifically for commercial purposes. This more nearly approximates the modern European situation, although it was reached through a different sequence of functional roles and from a different aboriginal base. In both cases, the Indians themselves were very conscious that these men were not genuine chiefs in terms of aboriginal leadership patterns, and both groups apparently suspected that the white-recognized chief was promoting the interests of the white men rather than those of the Red people. The new leadership patterns never became fully established. While these patterns were functional in terms of white-Indian relations, they were dysfunctional in terms of the native socio-cultural structure.

Among the Mundurucú, therefore, the integrity of the local unilocal groups was, in part, temporarily maintained by a change in the functional role of the chieftain. But the changed pattern of leadership eventually became dysfunctional resulted in part from the ecological adaptations necessary to rubber collection. These adaptations, however, did far more than contribute to the disintegration of political controls. They undercut the very economic basis of village life.

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Hevea brasiliensis, the native and most common species of rubber tree, grows wild throughout the upper waters of the Amazon. It can be exploited only during the dry season, and, in the upper Tapajós River valley, the maximum length of the gathering season is from May to early December, approximately seven months. Since these trees are scattered throughout the low lands near the watercourses, they are reached by curvilinear paths cut through the undergrowth. The spacing of the trees and the area enrolled in rubber collecting generally limit the number of trees tapped daily by one man to one hundred and fifty or less. Some collectors improve their yield per tree by maintaining two or three separate avenues which they visit only every second or third day. The distribution of rubber trees is such that each avenue gives access to trees within an area of about three to five square miles. The actual size of this territory depends, of course, upon the density of the rubber trees. In some sections of the Amazon drainage wild rubber is more abundant than are others. One may travel ten to twenty miles on reaches of river where rubber is sparse without passing a single habitation, but, where rubber is more plentiful, one encounters houses at intervals of a mile or even a half-mile.

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The rubber tapper must work in his avenue or avenues almost daily, and therefore must live near them. Since each tapper exploits a considerable tract of land, his physical remoteness from neighboring tappers is a matter of necessity. Thus, on the Tapajós River, which has a population of about 3,000 excluding the Mundurucú, there are only two Brazilian villages of any consequence. One of these has a population of about 700, and the other has only 150 people. The other settlements are merely hamlets consisting of a trading post and from two to seven houses. The majority of the population live in isolated houses on the river banks.

The exploitation of wild rubber is a solitary, individual occupation in that the tapping of the tree, the subsequent collection of the latex, and the final coagulation process are one-man jobs. The last phase, carried out at the end of the day, consists of solidifying the latex over a smoky fire. The simplicity and the daily time-schedule of the entire rubber process in Amazonia is such that no one can profitably leave off collection to specialize only in tapping or collection or coagulation. For similar reasons, two men do not work in the same avenue. However unsatisfactory, it would not be a practicable means of increasing production.

This brief account of how wild rubber is exploited is necessary to an understanding of changes in Mundurucú society. In the earlier contact period, the 438

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portion of the Mundurucú, whose increased need of and desire for trade goods could no longer be satisfied by the yield of only three months' work in the rubber economy, have made this choice.

These families represent the third stage of Mundurucú acculturation. Their resettlement in the rubber regions, however, has occurred in two ways. The first is a direct and complete adaptation to rubber collection, which can be studied in many contemporary inland villages. People desiring to increase their income from barter improve their rubber production by trees to make it more comfortable during the rains, plant gardens, and remain there. Although they maintain certain relationships with the inland villages, the limit of their social lives lie increasingly within the orbit of the community. Nuclear families dependent upon the trading posts. The final step in their incorporation into the local Brazilian economy and the culmination of this acculturative process will come when they abandon horticulture to devote full time to work on the rubber economy, and, like their Brazilian neighbors and the Amazon Extractivos, depend upon trade for the bulk of their food supply.

The second mode of readaptation to the rubber economy, while ending in the same type of settlement pattern and social organization as the first, involves passage through an intermediate stage. The previously mentioned mission on the Tapajós River had indifferent success in attracting the Mundurucú until the 1920's, when a policy of trading with the Indians was adopted. The missionaries were honest and generous in their commercial relations, and rubber-tapping became more profitable to the Indians. Their intensified collecting activities resulted in a general movement to the banks of the Tapajós River, and by the 1930's many interior villages had been abandoned.

The migrants settled so heavily on the river banks that they were able to maintain in new villages. These villages, however, lacked the men's organization, division of labor, and collective patterns which characterized the old type villages. Although the population shift from the old to new villages was heavy, it involved individual families rather than whole villages. The new villages grew as additional nuclear families arrived from the remotest communities. During this period of growth, since the new villages consisted of families, many of which had not previously been connected with one another, each family had to carry on the subsistence activities which were formerly the function of the extended family and village. Gardens were cleared and planted by husband and wife with whatever aid their children were capable of giving. Fish, taken by family members from the nearby rivers, rapidly replaced game formerly taken in collective hunts as the major source of protein. Meanwhile, increased rubber production enabled the Indians to buy the tools, [illegible], and canoes with which fishing was made more effective. As the new villages grew larger, the elementary division of labor was perpetuated, and the nuclear family became the basic unit of production.

Political authority in the Tapajós River was almost nonexistent. The migrants began to trade as individuals, first with the missionaries and later with the newly established Indian Post. This economic trend stripped the "chiefs" of one of their last remaining functions, and their role was reduced to that of intermediary between the villagers and the priest and Indian agent.

The amorphously structured villages which arose on the banks of the Tapajós River represent a transition to the family level and are not the culmination of adaptation to the ecology of rubber collection. Most of the residents of the Tapajós River still have to reside away from their villages during the rubber season, but the easy communication made possible by canoe transportation allows the majority to return to rubber production after planting their gardens.

The new individualism and fragmented division of labor, combined with facets of the old culture which had become dysfunctional in the new situation, contributed

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to the disorganization of Tappers River society. The political authority of appointed "chiefs" was now a means of extending the influence of the whites. The continuing migration of young men from the remaining primitive villages of the remainder caused an overbalance of men on the Tappers River, and conflicts over women became rife. Owing to the endless squabbles in villages which had lost their aboriginal basis of integration, dissidents moved off to live at their rubber estates or formed new and smaller villages. This fission process is still going on. Concomitantly, the Mission and the Indian Post are becoming more important as focal points in a new mode of integration of the Runiburri. Many members of the Tappers River population make their many sojourn homes at these agencies, which serve as centers of trade and of social and religious gatherings. It is from the Post and Mission, also, that the lines of authority now radiate.

28. Comparative Summary

The accompanying table and chart present the major phases of acculturation in summary form, as abstracted from the historical narrative. The basic acculturative factors in both cases exerted parallel influences, although the two societies were substantially different until the final culmination and reaction. There were four broad factors common to each. First, both became involved in a commercial, barter economy in which the collector of wild products was tied by bonds of debt and credit to particular merchants. Such involvement also occurred widely among native peoples who produced crops or livestock. This arrangement must be distinguished from cash transactions, in which, owing to the dependability of money as a medium of exchange, the primary producer has greater freedom of choice as to with whom he will deal. In a pure credit-barter economy, all transactions are based on a personal relationship between the principals; the merchant must be able to rely upon the continued patronage of the primary producer whereby the latter liquidates past debts while assuming new ones. It seems to be a basic procedure that the pre-literate Indian is kept in debt by the trader. While the latter can manipulate accounts at will, and no doubt is frequently guilty of malfeasance, he usually allows the Indian to buy beyond his means. The native-producer in selling his future production, and the creditor will not extend payment unless assured of delivery. Where such an economy is found, it is common for merchants to refuse to deal with primary producers who are in debt to another merchant. This is a "gentlemen's agreement" in the Amazon, although it is frequently violated by wandering traders. Second, the growing ties of dependency upon the traders are at the expense of collective bonds within the respective societies. Reliance upon individuals and institutions outside the native social system are intensified by a steady increase in demand and need for manufactured goods. This, as we have seen, goes beyond the mere initial allure of western tools and ornaments. Luxuries soon become necessities--a process that can be found in our own culture. Third, while Brazil nuts and quinel fare are very unlike articles, they imply a common cultural-ecological adaptation. Both are natural products having a reliable occurrence in worthwhile quantity within an area which can be most efficiently exploited by one man. Both require conservation, for careless exploitation can seriously reduce the number of fur-bearing animals, or render rubber trees worthless. The producer has an incentive to maintain the productivity of his resources. Finally, both rubber trees and fur-animals are sufficiently dispersed to require that persons exploiting them live or work at some distance from one another.

These factors of change were essentially the same among both Runiburri and Montagnais, and they were introduced through contact with the outside world. Their initial effects upon the aboriginal cultures were somewhat dissimilar, owing to aboriginal differences between the two groups. Whereas the Runiburri chief served at first as intermediary with the trader, this seems not to have been true of the Montagnais chief. Montagnais family heads, however, traded on behalf of their sons. For a short time, this pattern was followed by many

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of the stream is wild and solitary. The jungle overhangs the water and only once in a great while does a tiny wattle-and-daub house, the home of a collector of wild rubber, appear in a small clearing. At even greater intervals, the launch pauses or stops at little landers of three to six such houses, which form the trading centers of the scattered collector population.

Several days and barely 600 miles of this travel bring the voyager to the trading posts which conduct sporadic business with one segment of the Munduruca population. There are a few such establishments, all situated on the Tapajós River near the mouths of its eastern tributaries, the Cadiriri, Cabitutú, and das Tropas. A number of Munduruca villages are at the headwaters of the latter streams, and an occasional Indian, distinguished by tattooing, unusually ragged or ill-fitting clothing, and impassivity of facial expression can often be seen at the trading posts. Racially, the Munduruca does not stand out sharply, for Caucasoid genes are as thoroughly distributed among the Indian population as are Indian genes among the local Brazilians.

If one wishes to reach the village of Cabitutú, a typical Munduruca community of the seventeen lands east of the Tapajós, it is necessary to ascend the Cabitutú River in a canoe. After five days, or more during the rainy season, of down-to-dusk paddling, the port of the village is reached. This consists of a cleared stretch of river bank and a trail that leads to a house about 100 yards away. The house is usually occupied only during the dry season, when some residents of Cabitutú go there to pass the summer in fishing and rubber collecting. To reach the village, one must walk a half-day overland from this point. A well-beaten trail leads from the valley of the Cabitutú and over a ridge, dipping down again to cross a small stream. It continues through the forest and then abruptly emerges onto a sun-scorched savannah. The journey is then near an end, and a few miles of slow but steady ascent through the grasslands and past isolated clumps of forest bring one to the village.

The majority of the Munduruca now live on the banks of the larger streams of the area in order to have convenient access to the rubber trees that grow there. Only 300 Indians live in the contemporary savannah villages, but 700 reside on the Cururú River in contact with a Brazilian Indian Service post and a Roman Catholic mission staffed by Franciscan priests. Another 200, the most acculturated part of the population, live among the Brazilian population of the Tapajós River. But the region of mixed savannah and gallery forest east of the Tapajós River is their traditional habitat. Most of the events recounted in their mythology are believed to have occurred there, and this has been their homeland throughout the historic period and, according to Munduruca tradition, since the creation of man.

The modern savannah communities have preserved traditional Munduruca architecture and village plan to a greater extent than the riverine groups. Each has two to five dwelling houses and a men's house, arranged in a circle about a central plaza. But whereas the plazas formerly served as ceremonial and dance precincts and were kept free of weeds, they are now rank with undergrowth. And the houses are considerably smaller, reflecting the diminished population of the

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tribe in general and the extended family in particular. Also, although the men's houses are still built according to the traditional pattern, the dwellings are now built on a rectangular floor plan in contrast to the older elliptical shape.

Modification of the traditional Mundurucú village is even more striking on the shores of the Cururú River. Some villages number almost 100 inhabitants, but others are tiny hamlets of two small houses, none has the men's house. All dwellings face toward the river, but there is no over-all village plan. The houses are constructed of wattle and daub and, but for a few distinctively Mundurucú characteristics, are much like those of the Neo-Brazilian population. This conformity to the architecture of the whites[a] is even greater on the Tapajós River, where the Mundurucú live in single-family isolation.

The decline of Mundurucú culture is also evident in the physical appearance and dress of the people. All now wear the cheap cotton shirts and trousers or Mother Hubbard dresses sold to them by the traders. The more traditional men of the savannah villages generally wear penis sheath and bark belt beneath this raiment and usually hunt in the latter accouterments only. The elaborate body and facial tattooing that once formerly the hallmark of all Mundurucú, both male and female, is also on the wane. It is common now to see young people who are half-tattooed or who have only the first few lines, never completed because of the lapse of the practice.

History

The current decadence of Mundurucú culture is not unexpected. On the contrary, it is remarkable that the Mundurucú have preserved so much, and that they still have a semiautonomous society after more than a century and a half of continuous peaceful relations with the whites. They arrived late on the Amazon historical scene, and were not noted in published reports until 1768.[b] Whether the Mundurucú reported at that time were the members of a war party or had migrated from their home territory is uncertain, for they were seen far to the north of the upper Tapajós country on the Maué-Assú River, a tributary of a channel of the Madeira River named the Paraná Mirim. But their center of strength remained roughly in their present habitat, and they fought a colonial military detachment in that region in 1795.[c] Their defeat at the hands of government troops ended more than two decades of Mundurucú raids upon the Portuguese settlements of the Amazon and ushered in a period of peaceful relations and active alliance with the whites.

Subsequent to their pacification, large numbers of Mundurucú drifted into the vicinity of the growing towns and missions on the lower Madeira and Tapajós rivers. The missions are of especial interest to the subject matter of this study. In 1803 the mission of Santa Cruz was established on the lower Tapajós River

[a] The term "white" as applied herein to the Neo-Brazilian population of the Amazon is used as a shorthand way of saying, "people bearing a local variant of Luso-Brazilian culture, and who identify themselves with Brazilian society." Actually, the local people represent varying degrees of Caucasoid, Mongoloid, and Negroid admixture.

[b] Monteiro Noronha, 1862.

[c] Almeida Serra, 1860, pp. 6-8.

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had doubtless begun long before the establishment of the present mission, it is probable that some of Christian belief have diffused to the Munduruú and been reinterpreted by them for a period of more than 150 years. These items of belief are now, from the viewpoint of the Indians, Munduruú ideas. They recognize the affinity between Christian concepts and stories and some of their own, but they shrug off the former by saying that that is the way the priests tell the stories. Some informants thought that the priests had learned them from the Munduruú—and learned them poorly.

The vast majority of Christian teachings have not, of course, been integrated into Munduruú culture, and the Indians are exposed to these alien beliefs whenever they visit the mission or are visited by priests. Some of these, as the concepts of sin and damnation, are well known to the people, but make no emotional impact upon them. The idea of sin, especially original sin, is predicated upon the type of internalized authority more characteristic of the members of a complex society. Munduruú social control is not dependent upon a sense of guilt, and the structure of personal relations is adequate to govern individuals. The Indians look upon this central theme of Christianity with mixed views. Some feel that hell is the particular destination of white people, but others barely bother to think about it at all. This summarizes the attitude of most Munduruú toward missionary instruction. They rarely disbelieve the priests, for the latter are regarded as wise and sincere men. But their teachings are thought to be those of white men and thus to be true only for white men. There is no single and absolute body of unchangeable truth in the Munduruú mind. Within their own mythology, for example, there are two separate origins of man; logically, this appears contradictory, but the Munduruú do not put these beliefs to the test of logic. This statement does not imply that the Indians are illogical. Rather, it merely suggests that they, like most primitives, are not theologians. For this reason, the native and Christian beliefs coexist quite easily; but most Munduruú have little interest in the latter, although they may not actively resist and reject them.

Social and Economic Changes

Although it is doubtful that Christian proselytization has resulted in a large-scale displacement of native beliefs, the fact still remains that many aspects of Munduruú religion are in full decline. This decadence is not understandable as the result of a conflict of patterns of belief. Rather we must view religion, with Durkheim, as being in some way an expression of the mode of organization of the society. Also we are not concerned merely with belief, but with the closely connected subject of ritual; and the form of ritual is directly related to the structure of the social group that implements it.

With this thought in mind, we can review some of the major changes that have taken place in Munduruú society since their contact with the whites. First, the Munduruú were evidently patrilocal, as contrasted to their later matrilocality, until some time in the early nineteenth century.* This change in residence patterns revolutionized Munduruú social structure. More than 40

* See Murphy (1956) for a full discussion of the causes and implications of this change.

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patrilineal clans, ranked loosely into ceremonial phratries and divided almost equally between exogamous moieties, persisted, but the residential basis of patrilineality disappeared. Males formerly remained in the house and village of their birth, but now they were dispersed by the new marriage rule. Clans lost their lineage nuclei and correspondingly suffered a loss of function. Bride service had in a sense become permanent, and the men's house, formerly the dwelling of village bachelors and young men in bride service, became a permanent dwelling of the men.

That is essentially the situation in the contemporary savannah villages. But the social organization of the Cururú River settlements marks a further change from the savannah pattern. Matrilocality is still rather vaguely regarded as the ideal residence rule for all but the sons of chiefs, and the custom is followed in a significant number of cases. Actually, however, many marriages are patrilocal, and there is an increasing tendency for couples to become neolocal eventually.

Furthermore, family life and the social division of the sexes has been drastically modified on the Cururú River. The Cururú villages are the result of migrations by nuclear and extended families from near-by savannah villages and do not represent the simultaneous moves of entire villages. The men's house was never instituted on the Cururú and dwellings were characteristically small. Thus, the Cururú River houses are the residences of one to three related families, whereas those on the savannahs, even under present conditions of depopulation, have an average number of about four families each. Men reside in the same houses as do their wives and children on the Cururú River, and the nuclear family approaches being an independent social and economic unit. Under these conditions the village has little cohesion, and recurrent factionalism results in the proliferation of new and smaller villages. Among these units there are individual ties of marriage and kinship, but the mission provides almost the only context in which the residents of different villages interact in a group.*

Other factors have modified Mundurucú social structure and religion. The population is probably about one fourth of what it was 100 years ago;† this has resulted not only in greatly reduced villages and households, but it has decreased the number of shamans. Other influences have aggravated this decline. The end of warfare did much to devitalize the Mundurucú and to promote the growing disinterest in the native culture. It also eliminated a whole range of religious ceremonies that formed part of the head-hunting complex. Finally, there has been a profound shift in subsistence base among those Mundurucú who have moved to the shores of the Tapajós and Cururú rivers. In contrast to the savannah dwellers, who are vigorous hunters, these Indians depend primarily upon fish for protein. This has significance for the religious concepts and activities centered on the animal world and hunting.

* The respective social and economic organizations of savannah and Cururú River villages are compared and analyzed with reference to the ecology of rubber collection in another work. (Murphy, 1956)

† According to some sources, this decline has been even greater. Martius (1867, p. 390) estimated the Mundurucú population to be 40,000 in 1819, and Tocantins (1877, p. 101) calculated their number to be 14,910 in 1875.

11: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1956
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IV. CEREMONIALISM

Contemporary Ceremonialism

There exists a deep and nostalgic awareness among the older Munduruci that they are witnessing the disappearance of their way of life. It is felt acutely that most of the wise and learned men of the tribe are dead and that the remaining few will die within the near future. Only six traditional savannah villages remain and their populations are diminishing steadily. Those Munduruci who have migrated to the banks of rivers to escape the problems of village life or to have easier access to their rubber groves are rapidly losing the native culture. The young men who remain in the interior villages tend to be more conservative than the latter but still fail to transmit effectively even the attenuated body of tradition that they have learned. Although this dilemma is known and deplored by the Munduruci, they view the process with considerable fatalism. Little attempt is made to reinstate that which has lapsed for they view this deterioration as progressive and irreversible; they fully expect to lose the balance of their culture.

This realistic appraisal of the precarious position of Munduruci culture and society is in part the result of the disappearance of some of those ritual aspects of cul ure that were the expression of its vitality and were important to its integration. These aspects were, in turn, undermined by those modifications in the structure of the culture that have been taking place since the nineteenth century.

One of the integrative bases of Munduruci society—warfare—ended in the early part of this century as a result of the deep involvement of the Munduruci in rubber production. The end of warfare and head-hunting concluded a series of ceremonies that centered about the trophy head and the persons of the successful warriors. The status of the warrior, the power of Munduruci arms, and the supernatural significance of the trophy head were, accordingly, no longer celebrated. These were very real values in the nineteenth century and are still considered by the Munduruci themselves to be the hallmark of traditional Munduruci culture.)

Another series of rites that were held for the spirit mothers of the game has also fallen into disuse. No clear and obvious reason, such as the end of warfare, can be offered for the cessation of these ceremonies. Informants claim that today they lack a sufficient number of powerful shamans to perform the rites effectively. In a sense, this is true.

Two different ceremonies, named *Arasorai* and *Dajeseruparip*, were held for the mothers of the game. The former was a lengthy festival that lasted throughout the rainy season; the latter was much like the *Arasorai* in form and function but was compressed into a ten-day period. According to our closest possible calculations, the *Arasorai* could not have been celebrated since 1930 and must have lapsed during the period when a large part of the Munduruci population moved to the Cururú River. Communication between the traditional villages

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of the savannahs and the new ones of the river bank became attenuated, and a lack of powerful shamans in the former communities may well have developed. The shaman *Dajaxapoxp* ceremony was practiced as recently as 1941 or thereabouts but has since lapsed in spite of a few unsuccessful efforts to resurrect it. By that time the lack of shamans must have become acute, as it is today in many sections of the Munduruca country. Also, the early 1940's were a period of intense rubber collection, owing to the stimulus provided by World War II. During these years the Munduruca of the savannah villages grew more accustomed to clothing and other attractions of the outside world, and involvement with Brazilian society increased. The exact effect of these influences is uncertain, but interest in ritual undoubtedly was replaced increasingly by apathy and fatalism in the face of the decay of other aspects of Munduruca culture. Ceremonialism not only heightens social cohesion, but it reflects it. So far as the structure of Munduruca society was undermined by other factors, so also was the basis of the ceremonial routine.

The form of the extinct ceremonies for head-hunting and the spirit mothers of the game was described by informants. Other rites were reported by them in very fragmentary form and were attributed to a more remote past. Only a curing ceremony and the complex of ceremonial activities surrounding the sacred trumpets are still extant and were observed by me.

The Dajaxap Ceremony

One elderly Munduruca reported a ceremony called the *Dajaxap*, which he said had ceased to be practiced long before his birth and which had been related to him as a boy by the old men. The *Dajaxap* was said to have been held infrequently; it was initiated during the summer, and the associated ritual activities occurred intermittently over a two-year span.

It was not possible to obtain a full account of the purpose or form of the ceremony, for the informant remembered only disconnected items. It obviously had some significance as a rite of passage, for young boys[1] were taken into the men's house and allowed to return to their proper dwellings only at the end of the two-year ceremonial period. During this time they were referred to as pet jacamis by the men, and three stripes were cut through their hair, from front to back, in imitation of the feathering of that bird. When they were finally released from the men's house, they were given sharp wooden "beaks" with which they "perked" at the women. During their confinement they could leave the men's house only to relieve themselves. The men periodically hastened the growth of the boys by standing upon their feet and lifting them up by the armpits. The "young jacamis" could eat only a certain type of diet, the meat of which was carefully examined for traces of skin, which was believed to make the boys ill.

Other passages of the *Dajaxap* included the previously mentioned rite in which three powerful shamans transformed people into animals.[2] Flutes were played by

[1] My informant reported that boys are initiated for this ceremony at the age of three; I think this most doubtful and believe that five years is a more reasonable age.

[2] See p. 42.

V. MYTHOLOGY AND FOLKLORE

538 773 [114] A COLLECTION of fifty-eight myths and folktales was recorded in the villages of Missão Velha and Cabruá. The latter community, one of the more conservative savannah settlements, was far more productive of traditional lore of all kinds and most of the material below was gathered there. Although this chapter represents the complete body of oral literature collected in the field, there is undoubtedly more available if a wider range of Munduruú informants were to be sampled. Some myths, such as that of the origin of clans collected by Father [178] Kruse,[1] were specifically sought, but were unknown to those questioned. Munduruú mythology has undoubtedly undergone considerable attenuation, and these may be among the large number of stories no longer extant.

537 538 The older Munduruú say that oral literature was formerly much more actively recounted and transmitted. During the evenings, the elders told tales to all the assembled men, and children were brought to listen. These sessions are no longer frequent, but considerable interest is still manifest among the listeners. A number of men and children and usually some women gathered around whenever I found an informant with a story. Indeed, without an audience the narrator would not put forth his best efforts. The delivery was always quite animated and was accompanied by vivid gestures, imitations of animals, and dialogues between the personages in the story. The audience gave full attention, and it was considered most disrespectful to create any diversion during the narration. All [523] laughed readily and spontaneously at the appropriate passages, although many had heard the tale several times before.

538 773 517 The stories themselves range over a variety of subjects and are told for a number of purposes. They have been broken down into six major categories to provide continuity. This does not represent an attempt toward a systematic classification of the myths; actually the categories overlap considerably. For example, the animal tales are generally told for amusement, but they frequently explain the origin of certain species. On the other hand, the Karusakaibé cycle is a true creation myth and is centered upon the activities of the principal culture hero. [522] There are numerous passages in this myth cycle, however, that are considered highly humorous by both narrators and audiences, and in other incidents animals are also created. Similarly, a category of cosmological myths has been included, but there are several events in other tales that are also important to an understanding of Munduruú cosmology.

538 773 Through all, there is a running theme of the importance of the animal world to Munduruú society and of the close interrelation between the two. In many tales, animals either have the form of people or are able to take on this form. The mythology does more than explain the origin of animal species, for in almost all cases the various animals are transformed people. That the species had their origin in the human world tends to reinforce the special significance given them in ceremonies and the supernatural belief system.

This affinity between animals and humans will be evident in the saga of

[1] Kruse, 1954, pp. 26-27.

11: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1958
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VI. RELIGION IN A CHANGING SOCIETY

In the first chapter of this study it was suggested that changes in Munduruc religion could better be understood through an analysis of changes in other aspects of the culture than through knowledge of the activities of the missionaries. This is not to deny that the priests are and have been powerful and influential figures among the Indians. But their proselytizing efforts have consistently been realized only after certain social and economic changes have taken place. Also, changes in religion have consisted principally in the disappearance of activities and beliefs. The acquisition of Christianity has been an extremely slow process, although it might be hypothesized that it will become accelerated with further disintegration of Munduruc society.

Until very recent years, the core of Munduruc religious beliefs was the relationship between the world of humans and that of the game animals; the sharp decline of this aspect of Munduruc religion is one of the most striking changes. The bond between animals and humans was clearly expressed in the complex of beliefs and rites connected with the spirit mothers of the game, and the *Arosorui* and *Dajoruparip* ceremonies were the most important of all Munduruc rituals. Their enactment protected humans from the vengeance of the spirits and promoted the fertility and availability of game. Even the sacred trumpets, originally the abodes of ancestral spirits of localized clans, acquired a vague and undefined relationship with the animal spirits. Warfare, also, was rationalized by the beneficent influence of the trophy head upon these supernaturals. Furthermore, the shaman was not only responsible for feeding the spirits, but he was believed to be able to cure the animals that dwell in human form in the Land of the Game, much as he cures the tame game animals found in every Munduruc village.

The closeness of the human-animal bond can be seen in other aspects of belief. Mythology abounds with accounts of animals that at one time had human forms, and the origin of certain species from the metamorphosis of humans is common. That the reverse can also take place is seen in the conversion of people into animals during the *Daparip* ceremony. The best example of the merging and interpenetration of the two realms is the saga of Perisnit, who became almost animal through an extended and solitary stay in the forest.

The relationship between Munduruc society and the animal kingdom was one of symbiosis. The Munduruc depended upon the animals for subsistence, and the animals, through their spirit mothers, depended upon the Munduruc for the performance of rituals essential to their well-being and increase. The disappearance of these rituals is explained quite simply by the Munduruc as owing to the lack of shamans sufficiently powerful to protect the animal spirits and human participants from attacks by the *Turupari*. This view is true to the extent that there are fewer shamans among the contemporary Munduruc, but it also reflects a characteristic fatalism and apathy toward the aboriginal culture. Not only are modern shamans said to be weaker, but men, in general, are not believed to be as strong, brave, and wise as were their forebears. And game is not as plentiful as it was in times past, nor are women considered as beautiful and desirable.

11: Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1958
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In short, the Munduruc view their present condition with apathy and face the future with pessimism. They make no great effort to preserve past practices because they feel the struggle is futile and their way of life altered beyond redemption. As one Munduruc informant phrased it: "We are now all *parixut* [non-Munduruc]."

Reasons for this attitude can be found in the effects of more than a century and a half of contact with white society. During this period the population has been assailed by European-introduced epidemic diseases, and large numbers of people have migrated to the vicinity of white settlements where trade goods can be procured. The present Munduruc population is probably one quarter that of the mid-nineteenth century. This depopulation and the increased involvement in the extraction of wild latex brought an end to warfare during the early part of this century. This had the obvious effect of terminating the ceremonial cycle devoted to the trophy heads, but it also had other repercussions. Warfare was, even more importantly than hunting, the principle expression of masculine values among the Munduruc. It served to provide the men of several villages with a common goal, thereby promoting social cohesion, and it constituted a means of safely releasing repressed hostilities that had accumulated between members of the society. The end of warfare thus deprived the males of their sustaining and fortifying self-image as valiant warriors and removed one of the chief bases of social unity.

The pursuit of the hunt, however, continued after the termination of military forays. But the Munduruc had become deeply committed to rubber tapping, and the demands of this activity upon their time forced them to depend even more heavily upon fishing during the dry season, when rubber is collected. Today, the men of the savannah villages still hunt almost daily during the rainy season, but three quarters of the surviving Munduruc population, who live along the banks of the larger streams, rely chiefly upon fish as a source of protein throughout the year.

The shift from hunting as a primary subsistence activity further undercut the cultural emphasis upon masculine values, which were central to the religious complex surrounding game animals. Of even greater importance, it stripped the ceremonies of their economic rationale and made them less meaningful in terms of mundane activity. Finally, the progressive, ongoing fragmentation of Munduruc society has not only induced apathy toward the traditional culture, but it has weakened the group unity upon which the performance of ceremonies depended, and which they expressed.

Collective religious activity, in general, has almost completely disappeared among the Munduruc. Small gatherings take place when the sacred musical instruments are moved to a new men's house, and the trumpets are still played a few nights a week. But social change has had a profound effect upon this sector of Munduruc religion also. The connection between the instruments and the clans was based essentially on a patrilocal rule of residence. Under it, the dominant or only clan of the village could quite reasonably be considered as the owner of the village instruments which were the repository of the ancestral spirits of the clan. Since the change to matrilocality, the instruments are considered to belong to

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the clan of the man who manufactured them. If he dies or moves to another village, it is quite possible that no other man of that community will belong to the clan owning the trumpets. It is, therefore, understandable that informants were often vague when asked to explain the connection between clans and instruments. Many people believed that the trumpets had souls of their own and that these were the most important spirits resident within them. And, as has been mentioned, it was commonly thought that the playing of the instruments was pleasing to the spirit mothers of the game.

The actual function of the trumpets in present-day Mundurucú society has little to do with clanship, but much to do with the maintenance of the sharp dichotomy between the sexes. The instruments are primarily the property of the village men and are expressive of their unity and identity in the face of the women. In this connection it is significant that the villages that arose along the Cururú River have never had either the men's house or the sacred trumpets. As a corollary, the gulf between the sexes in social participation and labor that characterizes the savannah villages is lacking. On the Cururú the nuclear family is the basic social and economic unit. Men eat and sleep with their families and join their wives in tasks that would be considered degrading by a savannah dweller. But the demands of the rubber trade, combined with the covert hostility and factionalism that exist in all Mundurucú villages, are currently promoting migration from the savannah communities either to the Cururú River or to isolated residence along other streams. The end result will be the complete lapse of the sacred instruments and the men's organization.

The only other extant ceremonial is the one devoted to curing victims of soul loss. Since human souls are stolen by the spirit mothers of the game, this rite is also one of the few remaining religious acts that deals with this category of supernaturals. It is most significant that all the important means of obtaining the good will of these spirits and the increase of game have lapsed, although the Mundurucú have clung tenaciously to the technique of defending themselves against the spirits and rectifying the damage done by them. It may be said of the religion of the contemporary Mundurucú that it has retained those items that specifically protect the individual and, to a less degree the society, from harm though dropping those features that were not so immediately defensive in nature and which were more expressive of the integration and central values of the society.

To continue this line of thought, we turn to a consideration of those elements of Mundurucú religion that have maintained greatest vitality—shamanism and sorcery.[1] The two institutions are inseparable in the Mundurucú mind; the shaman cures diseases, which are invariably caused by sorcery, and the sorcerers are recruited from the ranks of the shamans. But disease, its explanation and its cure, has much greater significance than as a system of belief. Kluckhohn has shown for the Navaho that sorcery plays a vital role in the release of aggression,[2] and Beatrice Blythe Whiting's monograph *Paiute Sorcery*[3] shifts emphasis somewhat and stresses the function of sorcery as a mechanism of social control. Both of these fac-

[1] Kluckhohn, 1944.
[2] Whiting, 1950.

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tors, but primarily that of aggression release, play a part in Mundurucú sorcery also.

In a previously published work[8] I set forth the thesis that aggression cannot be tolerated in Mundurucú society because of the combination of a matrilocal residence rule and a patrilineal descent system. Under these social conditions each man has two sets of allegiances, one to his clan and the other to the household and village of his wife. Since the two do not coincide, he occupies social roles that potentially can conflict. That is, squarrel between households or villages may well pit fellow clansmen against each oher, and, correspondingly, conflict between clans can cause internal dissension within villages and even households. Open aggression is therefore avoided among the Mundurucú, and, although interpersonal and interfactional tensions abound within the group, they are generally suppressed. The feeling of horror at the outward display of hostility between men is so strong that informants were unwilling to give data upon its occurrence, although it occasionally happens.

Violence during warfare or the execution of a sorcerer, however, is thoroughly condoned. Attacks upon enemy tribes served to channel hostility upon surrogate objects outside the society and thus promoted social cohesion, but this avenue of release is no longer open. The only remaining catharsis for aggression is the practice of sorcery and the execution of suspected sorcerers. Another alternative, withdrawal from the frustrating situation, has been made possible by the general pacification of the upper Tapajós area and the consequent possibility of flight from village life. In former times it would have been most risky for an individual or family to forsake the mutual security offered by the local group, but today it is common for Mundurucú to live in the midst of the Brazilian rubber-gathering population. Even within the confines of Mundurucú territory, the tendency toward neolocal residence makes isolated or semi-isolated existence socially acceptable.

Mundurucú sorcery has a number of interesting facets. It is impossible to induce any shaman to admit the practice but the body of detailed knowledge of witchcraft techniques suggests that it indeed exists. Granting that witchcraft is not completely a figment of the Mundurucú imagination, the practitioner undoubtedly derives considerable gratification of his antisocial inclinations. Also, the Mundurucú generally fix suspicion of sorcery upon the more deviant shamans. Thus of the two people known by me to have been suspected of witchcraft, one was a rather humorless, silent, and aloof man, and the other, although more outgoing, far outstripped the other members of the village in rubber production. The threat of sorcery accusation, it may be inferred, tends to enforce social participation and conformity.

These factors of covert release of aggression and social control are, however, applicable only to the ranks of shamans. Persons born without shamanistic powers are unable to practice witchcraft, and sorcerers do not practice on behalf of others. But the dogged persistence of belief in black magic among the members of the society at large suggests that it does perform a very vital social function. It has al-

[8] Murphy, 1957.

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ready been mentioned that depopulation, the disintegration of the social structure, and the decline of such highly valued activities as warfare and the hunt have robbed the Mundurucú of much that was vital and positive in their way of life and left them disheartened and apathetic. Frustration, in the classic paradigm, normally leads to aggression, the expression of which is forbidden in this culture. Fear of sorcery among the Mundurucú is a means of embodying and phrasing in understandable terms not only the manifold anxieties of their existence but the latent aggression that nearly all members of the society carry within them. In this connection, it will be remembered that the intrusive objects made by the sorcerer are spread abroad and are not usually directed against any one person. The sorcerer is then, as the Mundurucú say, malevolent toward society in general. This is not only logically consistent with the indiscriminate ravages of epidemic disease, but it also suggests that the accusers of the sorcerer displace generalized aggression to his person and eradicate it through his execution.

That considerable aggression is unleashed upon the executed sorcerer can be inferred from the quality of the executions and the way in which informants report them. Many, if not most, executions take place from ambush, but some are bloody affairs in which the accused is beaten to death with clubs. And the Mundurucú enthusiastically relate these episodes with obvious hatred for the victim. The men of the village of Cabruá derived evident satisfaction by pointing to a brown smear on the posts of their men's house and saying: "That is where we wiped the blood of our last sorcerer from our hands." This emotional intensity parallels that reported by Kluckhohn among the Navaho,[8] and among both peoples this is atypical behavior.

Since aggression is related not only to real interpersonal differences but to frustration and general insecurity, it should be expected that witchcraft accusations would be most common in periods of stress. This is borne out by the Mundurucú practice of refraining from direct action against the sorcerer until illness becomes severe in the community and deaths occur. Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient historical material to demonstrate conclusively, as did Kluckholn, that sorcery troubles are correlated with historical periods of crisis. The best primary source on the Mundurucú, the report of the Brazilian engineer Antonio Tocantins, in 1875, describes sorcery executions as extremely frequent and one of the major problems of the Bacabal mission.[9] But it is difficult to evaluate the significance of this data and to control all the variables in the situation without similarly complete reports from other periods. In 1875 the Mundurucú still waged war and therefore had available a means of expression of hostility which had the obvious advantage of being directed outside the society. But on the other hand, Mundurucú society was then being subjected to its greatest threat since the contact with the whites, for these were the first years of the rubber-extraction period, and the Indians themselves were becoming increasingly involved in the industry. White rubber tappers were penetrating the area in growing numbers, and the mission had just been established. In

[8] Kluckhohn, 1944, p. 58.
[9] Tocantins, 1877, pp. 107–111.

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third village, however, the power of the chief's family must have been weak, for both he and his son were slain as sorcerers by the other men of the village. The tendency for villages to fractionate because of sorcery fears and accusations is probably greater now than in the past. Not only is village cohesion in general much weaker, but the disappearance of such leadership activities as heading war parties and trading on behalf of the village as a whole has made it most difficult for the chief to obtain the consensus necessary to carrying out an execution. It must not be thought, however, that lack of unanimity in sorcerer killings indicates a decline in belief in black magic; it rather reflects distrust of the sincerity of the accusers and the existence of latent factionalism that may not be directly caused by witchcraft. But these occasions bring conflicts to a head and open breaches that are in many cases irreparable and can be resolved only by the removal of one party.

This analysis of the Mundurucú data indicates that although the institution of sorcery may be viewed in one light as socially integrative, so far as it acts as a cathartic for aggression, it may also be most disruptive of social cohesion, for it often aggravates tensions.[6] It would seem that shamanism and sorcery have become complementary to the central direction of social and economic change. The ecological accommodation to increased participation in rubber production calls for the dispersal of the population into ever smaller units in the vicinity of the stands of wild rubber trees. Correspondingly, sorcery conflicts tend to disintegrate larger village units while being integrative for factions within the village, which then commonly establish themselves as small local groups. This is not the only means by which social fission occurs. Latent conflicts that do not involve sorcery sometimes cause families and factions to leave villages; others leave because of the economic expediency of residence near their rubber avenues. But sorcery remains as a contributing motivation for the participants in the process. The Mundurucú example thus suggests that the institution of sorcery may promote the cohesion of a society as a whole, but only where other bases for such cohesion exist.

The close relationship of religion to the social structure can be seen quite as clearly in the context of change as in a synchronic dimension. As the society has become progressively divested of those mechanisms that integrated tribe and village, so also have group religious activities fallen into abeyance. What remains are the essentially individual practices of shamanism and sorcery. This is the same process noted for other parts of South America by Steward, and which he has phrased as part of a change in "level of sociocultural integration."[7] But beyond the scope of participation in religious activity we have seen another selective factor determining which segments of religion will persist. This, in brief, is the simple question of whether the element serves some social function in the changed setting. By this criterion, the warfare ceremonies have totally disappeared, and the ceremonies for the animal spirits have declined with the shift of a large part of the population from hunting to fishing. Similarly, the

[6] Kluckhohn (1944, p. 71) has noted the presence of disruptive elements in Navaho witchcraft also, although the analysis of these tendencies were beyond the scope of his treatise.
[7] Steward, 1951.

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religious complex of the sacred musical instruments is extant only in five villages. The beliefs connected with all these rituals remain, but, lacking expression in action, are no longer effectively transmitted to the young.

On the other hand, those aspects of religion that are keyed to the persistent problems of Munduruc̀u society show great tenacity. Sorcery beliefs may be currently disruptive of tribal and village integration, but they maintain a vital social function in terms of the needs of a society undergoing fractionation and individualization. These are beliefs that explain human malice and suffering and offer techniques for defense against them. They are not closely linked to and dependent upon the peculiarities of native Munduruc̀u culture, or of any particular lowland South American culture, and it is undoubtedly for this reason that shamanism and sorcery remain active among the peasants of the impoverished Amazon and can be found among the lower classes of its cities. The maintenance of specifically defensive functions of native religion is not peculiar to South America. We need only look to the United States, where the Sun Dance and the peyote cult have become primarily curing rites. These are flourishing parts of radically changed cultures and expressions of altered social systems and cannot be looked upon as lag phenomena. If there is a functional relation between religion and society, it must also exist in historical depth.

12:Murphy E-5 (1952-1953) 1960
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121 to know how the parts of the system are related to one another and to the totality. It is also necessary to understand how the system becomes a coherent and integrated set of social relationships in terms of observable behavior. I attempt to do this in the present work. A functional analysis of social structure has another important value, and one that is not fully utilized by anthropologists. Since a basic assumption of the method is that a system has internal coherence, it is possible to see clues to the past in items that do not fit into the present. This, of course, is reminiscent of the now unpopular use of "survivals" for purposes of historical reconstruction. I do not think, however, that I have engaged in a form of "conjectural" history. Rather, I have attempted to relate my clues, the nonfunctional and disfunctional items of the present, to the probable structure of Munduruc\u00fa society as it existed in the past. And I have attempted to marshal as much historical and ethnographic data as possible to validate my reconstructions. In this way, I have avoided speculations based on one or another shred of data and have remained within the framework of structural analysis. And, it might be added, I have thus tried to bring my historical material under the canons of internal criticism of historical data.

178 Economy and social structure have changed a great deal during the past century and a half of Munduruc\u00fa history, making the tribe an especially good subject for this type
124 of study. I have relied to a certain extent on older informants for data of past conditions. The memories of the old
128 people are variable in accuracy, richness, and content, and I tried where possible to corroborate points with a number of informants. It would, however, be naïve to assume that material obtained from an old informant, however well corroborated, is valid for the "aboriginal," or pre-contact, period. A sixty-year-old man—of whom there are

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174 591 614 tain, but it probably took place during the mid-nineteenth century. Matrilocality was the only mode of residence that even the oldest Mundurucú could remember, and they had no traditional memory of previous patrilocality. Also, Tocantins reported that, in 1873, quarrels between men were resolved by the departure of one of the parties from the village,[13] suggesting the absence of a local lineage and the high male mobility characteristic of Mundurucú matrilocality.

174 439 178 591 614 The reasons for the shift in post-marital residence rule are far less certain, and no final conclusions can be arrived at on the basis of available data. Certain known changes in productive relations, however, yield inference to the possible processes at work. It will be remembered that before their deep involvement in rubber production, the Mundurucú traded extensively in farinha, or manioc flour. This must have caused a substantial increase in the amount of land under cultivation and a great expansion of production of bitter manioc.[14] The roles of the male and female did not undergo any important shift. Men cleared the forest land for gardens, as they do today, and the women cared for the crops, harvested them, and manufactured the farinha. Women thus became of greater economic importance, because of the increase in gross amount

[13] Tocantins, 1877, p. 111.

[14] The extent of this early trade in manioc flour may be inferred from Martius's account (1867, p. 395 n.): "This tribe is more industrious than any other. It is calculated that the inhabitants of the settlements on the Tapajóz prepare 6000 pecks [3.12 litres each] of manioc flour annually, those of the Mauhé 1500 and those of the Canomá 800, which for the most part is exported to Santarem and neighboring locales. They readily give abundantly therefrom to the priests as a gift. In the year 1819 the Mundrucús of the Canomá collected and brought to market 900 *arrobas* [32 pounds each] of cinnamon clove and an equal amount of sarsaparilla. Through such a disposition to homely diligence, the speedy settlement of all the Mundrucús among the whites is to be expected."

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of work performed and the added importance of the co-operative labor involved in farinha manufacture. This process, as has been described, calls for a division of tasks and a degree of organization among the women of a household. The latter, under the patrilocal rule, consisted of the wives of the lineage members, a group of women of diverse residential origins having no preëstablished ties of mutual accommodation and cooperation. The altered social system resulting from matrilocality, however, maintained the household group of sisters and their daughters and provided for the continuity of a female work group bonded by ties of kinship and within which the members were reared. The new-type household was thus better suited to its intensified role as a productive unit.[15]

To review the reconstruction of changes in Mundurucú clanship, reference to a period well before the contact of the tribe with the whites is necessary. It was hypothesized that the Mundurucú were at that time patrilineal and patrilocal and were undergoing population expansion. The clans may have been completely localized; they surely had large local nuclei. The pressure of growing population on resources resulted in the budding off of lineages from these local groups; these lineages became subclans and ultimately independent clans maintaining a phratric affiliation with the parent unit. The colonization of the Amazon Valley and the subsequent establishment of trade with the whites, in which farinha was exchanged for manufactured articles, may have so enhanced the importance of female

[15] Eggan (1950, p. 131) states that the Hopi remained matrilocal despite the transfer of the major horticultural chores to the men because it was efficacious that the corn-grinding groups of related females be maintained. This presents a parallel to the hypothesized Mundurucú situation, although the Hopi pose a question of the maintenance of a pattern while the problem here is one of change. From either a causal or a functional viewpoint, however, the two cases support each other.

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591 velopment, followed by ultimate transition to matrilineal-
611 ity, or at least a matrilineal emphasis. But such changes need time, and the recent increase of bilocality and neolocality among the Mundurucú have undercut the possibility for further evolution of any form of unilineal-descent system.

591 Matrilocality is less uniformly practiced now than in the
178 recent past, mainly because of the present reduced population of village and household. The extended family has been correspondingly weakened and is frequently unable to keep the married daughter if the husband does not desire to live with his affinals. Or death may cause a girl to be left without close female relatives. She may then join women who are sisters and mothers to her in a classificatory sense, but toward whom her emotional ties are weaker, or she may join her husband's family. As the extended family of related women grows weaker, so also does matrilocality. But most marriages in the savannah communities follow the rule; the most common exceptions are unions in which the couple establishes its own residence at the man's rubber avenue.

59% Although the Mundurucú extended family is much
592 smaller than in past times and is progressively giving way to the nuclear family, it continues as a fundamental unit in all phases of economic life. Private property in the
[422] household consists only of personal items and tools, and the nuclear family has significance in the consumption economy, chiefly in the purchase of items from the trader. Garden products are shared by all members of the extended family, as are fish and game. The only exception to
[224] this rule is when game is scarce, and the day's kill consists only of small animals or birds. On such occasions, the nuclear family of the hunter may consume the food, but it is just as frequently divided, albeit in small quantities, among the members of the house.

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in the powers and duties of the office. Older informants said that chiefs formerly inherited the office either from their father or older brother. Lineal continuity of the chieftaincy in a village was ensured by the general exemption of most of the chief's sons from the rule of matrilocality. The chief, although never authoritarian or possessed of coercive powers among the Mundurucú, was nonetheless an important figure in the community. His was the most prominent voice in any collective decisions affecting the village as a whole; he frequently led war parties, and he represented the village in commercial or other relations with the whites. His position was reinforced in a number of ways. He was generally selected from the available and possible heirs because he had distinguished himself as a warrior through taking trophy heads and was the repository of lore and songs. And the patrilocality of the chief's family allowed him to build a strong kin group composed of sons and sons-in-law. This exemption from the normal residence rule also legitimized the line due to the genealogical continuity of the family within the village. Thus, the chieftaincy symbolized the village as a continuing entity. Furthermore, his special relations with the whites and his role of intermediary, in which he sold the trade commodities gathered by the villagers and distributed the returns among them, did much to enhance his status.

The Mundurucú look upon their contemporary village chiefs with mixed feelings. The chief is often personally respected and liked by the people, but they simultaneously feel the office to be inconsequential and of little importance today. And they quite frequently look upon their particular leader as an illegal occupant of the position. Also, the role of chief is commonly a center of latent hostility and factionalism. This change has come about through the disappearance of the more integrative aspects

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of the chieftaincy and the persistence and aggravation of certain disruptive features.

First, the Mundurucú chief no longer holds the all-important position of war leader. Second, he now trades on behalf of his village in theory only. In the nineteenth century the trading function of the chief tended to bolster his traditional powers and some became well-known figures in the Tapajós valley. As the rubber trade grew in importance, the control of the chiefs became increasingly important to those traders who monopolized the Indian commerce. Since this period corresponded with the declining days of warfare, some traders were able to install their own appointees as village chiefs where the rightful holder of the office was unsuitable to them. Besides, traders occasionally took Mundurucú to Belém, where they were introduced to government functionaries and awarded the title of *capitão*. These new luminaries were sent back to their villages and assigned the task of representing the trader. Thus, legitimate lines of succession were broken, and the new chiefs owed their positions to the trader. The villagers were well aware of this.

The general patrilocality of the chief's family, no matter by what means he was selected, continued; his extended family remained the largest such unit in the village and, more important, was the only significant group of close male, patrilineal relatives. The rest of the village men were of diverse affiliations and found organization within the context of men's-house activities. But they were faced with a powerful kin group in which political authority was vested. If points of difference arose, the men of the chief's group rallied to his support, but antagonisms were aroused among the other men. In former times, the important functions served by the chieftainship undoubtedly overrode the potential factionalism inherent in this situation, but, in

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the new setting, the position was stripped of legitimate succession and divested of the attributes that commanded greatest respect. The strength of the chief's group thus became a sore point in village life.

These problems are amply illustrated by the contemporary chieftaincies of the savannah villages of Cabruá and Cabitutú. Until two years before my investigation, an old Mundurucú whose Portuguese name is Caetano had been chief in the village of Cabitutú. He did not occupy the office by patrilineal succession, but was appointed by a trader who maintained exclusive dealings with the villagers. The residents of Cabitutú respected and accepted Caetano because of his age and the fact that he was not aggressive in promoting the interests of the trader. When the old chief of Cabruá, who possessed the office legitimately, died, the trader decided to shift Caetano from Cabitutú to Cabruá and to install Caetano's son in the vacancy created. The latter, a young man named Biboi, had been raised by the trader. In contrast to the usual unassertive, retiring, coöperative, and nonaggressive Mundurucú conduct, Biboi was loud and vociferous in his claim to be "the only one in Cabitutú who knows how to tell the people to work and who can deal with the trader." The villagers looked upon an older man, who was also a shaman, as the rightful possessor of the office and regarded Biboi as a usurper and tool of the trader. They were prepared to kill him, but refrained because of respect for his father, Caetano, and his family. To kill Biboi would have caused endless trouble, and the Mundurucú assiduously avoid such situations.

In the meantime, Caetano's tenure of the chieftaincy of Cabruá was somewhat uneasy. More than one-third of the men residing in the village did business with another trader than the one who had made the appointment, and

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178 578 622 they felt that Caetano did not represent them. Furthermore, one of these men was the son of the former chief, and many villagers confided that he, and not Caetano, was the rightful leader. One of Caetano's sons, a stepson, and a son-in-law also lived in the village, however, and he had too much support for any effective opposition that would not develop into open conflict. That the position of the chief was not a source of open strife is due not only to the strength of the chief's family but to the contemporary weakness of the office. Large-scale joint activities, such as inter-village ceremonies and warfare, no longer exist, and situations that demand firm authority are rare. Coöperative economic endeavors among the men are freely entered into within the framework of the men's organization. Thus, Caetano seldom was compelled to issue orders and formulate policies that would affect the entire village. Also, as in Cabitutú, Caetano was respected because of his age and his cultivation of Mundurucú tradition.

Despite the relative placidity of politics in Cabruá, as contrasted to Cabitutú, there were several points of tension. Shortly after Caetano assumed the chieftaincy, the men of Cabruá accused his stepson of sorcery and planned to kill him. But the chief and his kinsmen intervened, and the man's life was spared. Relations remained strained between the two factions, although the everyday behavior of the principals showed no evidence of this.

The situation of Biboi in Cabitutú was precarious. During our stay, his father fell from a palm tree and seemed badly injured. Biboi immediately left Cabitutú to rush to Caetano's side. He was motivated partly by filial devotion, but he also knew that his life would be in jeopardy if the old man died as a result of the injuries. He explained to us that in this event, he would move to the Tapajós River. When asked why he blandly evaded his true motives and

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said, "Because it is beautiful there." Caetano recovered, and the unpopular Bíboi returned to Cabitutú.

Today, the role of the chief as intermediary for his village with the traders is a fiction. The intricate trading system of Cabruá will be discussed below, but it must be mentioned here that the traders weigh each man's rubber production separately and give him his own credit, and each person's purchases are also separately charged to his own account. But all transactions are conducted in the presence of the chief, and he voices his followers' requirements of merchandise. Since it is convenient to the interests of the traders that the people feel they owe to the chief, the latter is charged with the combined accounts of his followers, and he is therefore expected to encourage their productivity. Despite this ruse, persons who are deeply in debt are refused further credit while those with only a small debt or a credit are given merchandise. The fiction of the chief's position is partly maintained, however, which tends to integrate his body of immediate followers. But the people understand, however imperfectly, that their fortunes and those of the chief are not identical and that the hard worker receives goods while the shirker does not, no matter how much the chief is said to owe.

The ultimate effect of trade probably will be to individualize commercial transactions further, and the office of chief will then lose almost all function. Its contemporary weakness, combined with the factionalism latent in the creation of patrilineages in a matrilocal society, have made it the center of controversy. However, the chieftaincy continues to symbolize the identity of the village, and, despite its stormy aspects, the decline of the institution is directly related to the progressive disorganization of village life.

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particular patrons. Two or three decades ago, all savannah communities were much alike and, except for differing places of dry-season residence, the populations of all maintained frequent contact through intermarriage, visiting, and joint participation in ceremonies. The cultural and social differentiation of Cururú and savannah dweller is thus quite recent.

There are two major points of difference between the migration to the Cururú and that to the more northerly rivers. First, in the former large numbers of people moved in a comparatively short period. Secondly, the patrons on the Cururú River were not Brazilian rubber traders, but a group of German Catholic missionaries who were deliberately attempting to attract the population and modify their culture. The missionaries achieved little success during their first ten to fifteen years of activity and attracted large numbers of Indians only after the price of rubber rose. On the other hand, the astuteness of this example of applied anthropology should be given recognition, for the missionaries offered high rubber prices and low-cost merchandise, and thereby accelerated the migration process.

THE NATURE OF THE MIGRATION

The population move to the Cururú occurred in piecemeal fashion, for, as in the contemporary savannahs, nuclear families or segments of extended families shifted and not whole villages. Co-resident groups of Indians who commonly collected rubber and fished on the banks of the Cururú during the dry season were lured into setting up permanent residences there by the attraction of trade goods and the persuasion of the missionaries, who sought thereby to bring the Indians more directly under their influence. Other rubber-season residents perceived the economic advantages of all-year occupation of the Cururú,

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and they too abandoned the annual return to the savannahs. The material prosperity of these emigrants lured more of their brethren into increased rubber collection, and greater numbers of Indians began to establish permanent residences on the river banks. There is little doubt that the same centrifugal tendencies that are currently operating in the remaining savannah communities did much to hasten the migration. In time, small villages were established on the Cururú River.

Those who tapped rubber on the Cururú tended, as the people of Cabruá today, to choose avenues near their close kinsmen and house mates. Unmarried sons worked with their fathers, and sons-in-law also had contiguous rubber trails; other relatives worked nearby if it was convenient. When these families shifted to permanent occupancy of the river shores, they maintained these affiliations and either lived in the same dwelling or built adjacent but separate houses. Other persons who had rubber avenues in the vicinity migrated later and chose to settle in these little hamlets. Although this might force them to walk for thirty or forty-five minutes to their daily labors, the presence of others afforded the opportunity to share in farinha-making equipment and, of greater importance, provided them with the companionship and social intercourse to which village life had accustomed them.

Other migrants to the Cururú settled in these villages also, but their rubber avenues were too far away to allow daily commuting, and they had to follow the familiar pattern of village residence in the rainy season and temporary habitation of the rubber avenue during the dry summer. This was no great inconvenience, because these dry-season houses were usually within a few hours of the village and were easily accessible by water. The benefits of water transportation could only be enjoyed if one had a canoe.

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of course, but that could be obtained in trade with the mission if one worked hard.

The villages grew by increments and with no special order. The original houses were of the sort that the Mundurucú usually erected in their rubber avenues. These had a square floor plan, and, when graced with walls, usually were made of straw or wattle and daub in the manner characteristic of those of the Brazilian rubber collectors. Later additions to the village followed this design and furthered the already drastic alteration of the traditional Mundurucú settlement by being built in any convenient space in the village clearing, with no reference to an over-all village plan. Today, the usual Mundurucú village on the Cururú consists of from three to eleven square wattle-and-daub houses having no special arrangement except that all face toward the river.

The circumstances of the migration induced other changes in village organization. Since the first permanent settlers on the Cururú came in small groups of one to three nuclear families, it was no longer possible to carry out the old cooperative economic organization; this is essentially the same problem faced by the contemporary campineiros during the rubber season. There were not enough men in any one place to carry on the almost daily collective hunts, but the proximity of the river and the stable food supply it offered compensated for this. Timbó-fishing trips still required a concentration of forces, but, since they occurred only periodically during the dry season, the gatherings could be arranged by sending invitations abroad. Everyday bow-and-arrow fishing required only two men, one to handle the canoe and the other to shoot the fish. If fishing was done from the banks, one man was adequate to the task. Thus, the new economic circumstances of their lives combined with the nature of the migration itself to decrease the dependency of the individual on large group-

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crease the dependency of the individual on a large group.

As the migration continued and the villages grew in size, these conditions were perpetuated, for the increased use of firearms, bought through the now larger proceeds of rubber collection, made the collective hunt less necessary. Also, hunting was not as profitable on the Cururú, for the growing concentration of population along the river made game correspondingly scarcer, and fishing was, comparatively, a much more fruitful and stable source of subsistence. A further deterrent to hunting on the Cururú is that during the rainy season, the only period when the Indians have sufficient time to hunt, the low forest lands adjoining the river and its small tributaries are flooded, making the chase most difficult.

A shift of emphasis from male labor in hunting, which requires an expenditure in time of eight to ten hours a day, to fishing, necessitating only two to five hours for a good catch, left the men with considerable extra time. This time had to be used either for rubber collection or for helping their wives in the manufacture of farinha, because the early river-bank groups did not include sufficient women to carry on the old household or the village female work group. Even the boys were pressed into service, a sharp change from the free-roaming life of the sons of the campineiros.

The same circumstances enforced a complete breakdown of the organization of labor in gardening. The large male work groups of the savannahs were no longer possible, and the heavy work of garden clearing was done by the men of each household. If only one nuclear family represented the embryonic settlement, the man had to do all the work himself, aided to whatever extent possible by his wife and sons. All other phases of gardening work were

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done by the men, women, and children, working in common.

An entirely new work pattern and division of labor grew out of these necessary changes. As other households were established in the growing villages, they too fell into the same system, for the earlier households, regardless of size, had become established as the basic unit in the production and consumption economies. Unless the newcomer had a very close blood tie with an established household and could thus be included in its economic arrangements, he would have to form his own economic unit, consisting of himself and his family.

Once a social change is made and a new adjustment found, it is almost impossible to turn the clock back and reestablish what has been lost. This is evident among the Mundurucú, and part of the irreversibility of process is in this case due to the women. They, especially, liked the new work arrangements. They now shared many tasks with the men and enjoyed a correspondingly improved status in relation to the opposite sex. The Cururú woman works less than her sisters of the savannahs and has no desire to return to the rigid social and economic cleavage between the sexes. Her relatively greater amount of free time enables her to help more in the rubber avenues than the savannah woman, but since this further solidifies the male-female economic bond and gives her a greater claim to the proceeds of the cash product, the extra work redounds ultimately to her advantage. This and the fact that the whetted appetite of the Cururú woman for finery and other, more utilitarian, articles of Western civilization is seemingly limitless make her a formidable factor in social change.

In view of all this, it is understandable that no Mun-

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178 182 345 [562] durucú village on the Cururú River has ever had the men's house. The male organization has meaning primarily in terms of the social and economic division of the sexes and in the maintenance of male solidarity and dominance. These have been drastically altered, and the men's house would have no function in the new social structure. Similarly, the ceremonies for the game-animal spirits have never been observed on the Cururú, because the major festivals were focused on the hunt and depended on the men's house for their proper completion. Also of importance has been the presence of the missionaries, who have consistently discouraged native religious ceremonies in the region under their influence.

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THE RUBBER TRADE

182 361 184 When posed with the question of why he prefers residence on the Cururú to the savannahs, the male Mundurucú informant gives three reasons. First, that even in the rainy season one can catch enough fish in the Cururú River, while the campineiro may hunt to no avail for several days in succession. Second, that savannah life requires much walking, but that, on the Cururú, the canoe makes travel easier. The walks referred to are those long treks that the savannah dweller must make at the beginning and end of the rubber season, when his supply of farinha has to be replenished, or when work has to be done in the gardens. [439] Third, that on the Cururú trade goods are plentiful and accessible, and a better return is received from rubber.

439 648 The latter point is important, because the Mundurucú are aware of the sharp practices of the Brazilian traders, although they feel powerless to cope with them. "Not only does the patron give very little for rubber," say the Cururú River residents "but when asked for more expensive articles he always replies that he does not have any

/21 cont./

241 192 462 time of planting onward. In terms of their basic meaning, these two words could be translated as follows: kat as "clearing" and ko as "planting." It thus becomes clearer why the woman would never say, for instance, that she is going to the kat, to the clearing, because it is not she who does this, but /would say/ that she is going to the ko, the planting, because it is she, in fact, who does the planting. The opposite applies to the man. If, however, there is need for the use of a general, impersonal term, the man will also use the word ko, but with the respective modifier of its being "hers" or "the woman's," so that no misunderstanding may arise.

2. Garden and family: agricultural property and mutual assistance

241 621 It is plain that this complex of agricultural matters is reflected in the family life of the Indians, not only for the Mundurukú who still live communally in the old village system, but also for those [178] [591] who have broken away from this way of life and set up a separate nucleus with their family, living an isolated life with their own house and garden. Indeed, nowadays, it is necessary to make a distinction:

[162] 1. Between the Mundurukú Indians of the interior, numbering 250, a minority of approximately one-fifth of the total of 1,200, who still live according to the traditional system of tribal communities or villages;

[177] 2. Between the Mundurukú who are already more or less acculturated /and live/ on the Tapajós, Cururú, Tropas, etc. rivers.

/22/ Within the first group, in the interior, we find more or 241 476 621 less the primitive or traditional form of the Mundurukú agricultural system: a system of collective labor based on mutual assistance. Murphy indicates the present conditions in the villages of the interior when he says: "Every adult /Mundurukú/ of the plains of the male sex has his own plot which is cleared by the collective effort of all the men in the village and which is planted with manioc roots with the cooperation of the entire village." (11) This cooperative labor

11. Murphy, 1954: 28.

/23 cont./

*241 421 462 594 right? She, /in turn/, without the man's previous labor, could only plant /24/ in small quantities, and furthermore, for lack of proper soil preparation, the cultivated plants would not grow properly. In both cases, the results would be meager and the family's subsistence, in this sphere, would be endangered. Hence the need for this right of mutual indemnification.

*241 476 [423] Every man, or every family, sets up his own garden and owns it by exclusive right. The owner, however, requests the assistance of his relatives or of the men of the group in which he lives, to help him in his tasks (clearing, felling, etc.), while the woman, in turn, later (but not always) requests the help of women for the typically feminine tasks within the above-mentioned system of the division of labor. (13) The community assists the individual, or rather, the

*241 476 421

13. Although we are dealing here with the agriculture of the present-day Mundurukú, let us note two pieces of information, gathered separately and in widely separated places, namely, one by myself among the acculturated Mundurukú of the Cururú River, and the other by the missionary Brother Angélico in a village of the interior, in Dekudyem. According to these data, the agricultural system of the ancient Mundurukú was slightly different as regards mutual assistance and ownership of the gardens. They say that, originally, the entire group prepared a large plot for all members of the community and that individual rights to the garden were based, precisely, on mutual

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*241 476 garden. When, however, the utilization of the mature garden is involved, then the family manifests and exercises its right of private ownership. In most cases, man and wife or the members of the family prefer to pull out the manioc by themselves. The garden is thus utilized, as a rule, without recourse to other people or to the group. This, then, is the position of the Mundurukú family regard- [594] ing the garden and its produce within the tribal community: The family is located within the community, and needs and obtains from this community mutual /26/ assistance for the garden tasks; but the [423] family always reserves exclusive rights to the ownership, use, and enjoyment of its garden.

● 178 [621] How do things stand, however, for the acculturated Mundurukú? Nowadays, about four-fifths of the Mundurukú have given up the system of life in tribal communities. For these, there is no longer any direct connection with village life, and their communities have been [342] dissolved. The families break free. There are no longer communal [423] houses, but each family has its own home. Inevitably, as a result, they own private plots and gardens. And just as each family lives alone, thus tooeach man or each family prepares his own plot individually. This is the basic pattern. But owing to existing difficulties [476] and to need, mutual assistance has been retained as a beneficial element. Relatives and neighbors are invited to help out in the garden, and conversely, those who lent their assistance are helped in their turn, in the same fashion and under the same conditions as was formerly done within the system of communal life.

*241 177 182 462 476 As an essential conclusion, there results from this that among the Mundurukú the division and execution of garden tasks according to sex groups and to work cycles, the planting system, and the mutual cooperation by invitation, are very stable culture elements. They have endured and have not suffered essential modifications, even after the dissolution of the tribal communities to which they pertained and the acculturation to the new, neo-Brazilian environment.

*241 602 421 There still exists a type of garden which, up to a point, could be called a "communal garden." This type, however, is found only among relatives in the narrower sense of the term. When relatives (for example: the families of a father and son or of several brothers)